



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/873,444	06/04/2001	Helmar-Steffen Gehrke	10191/1847	4385

7590

07/15/2003

KENYON & KENYON  
One Broadway  
New York, NY 10004

EXAMINER

NGUYEN, KIMNHUNG T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2674

DATE MAILED: 07/15/2003

4

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

51

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/873,444

Applicant(s)

GEHRKE ET AL.

Examiner

Kimnhung Nguyen

Art Unit

2674

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                      4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_.
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                      5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_.
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

### DETAILED ACTION

This Application has been examined. The claims 1-6 are pending. The examination results are as following.

#### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

1. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Palalau et al. (US patent 6,373,472).

Regarding claim 1, Palalau et al. disclose a method for allocating operating control functions (see driver control interface controls the values of features group switches in a vehicle, see abstract, see figure 1) to operating communications controls of an electronic which is capable of executing functions of a plurality of electronic devices as switchable functions (see a plurality of features of group switches are located on a steering wheel, see abstract), the method comprising a predetermined number of operator controls assigned to respective operating functions of each of the device (see figures 9a-9b); and switching (34, figure 2a) over device various among device (audio, climate,

Art Unit: 2674

navigation...) the operating functions (28a-28f) of the operator controls being changed corresponding to the assignment (see column 3, lines 44-58).

Regarding claims 2-4, Palalau et al. discloses the operator controls using the play symbol (see figure 9B) and include the type of a telephone (see figure 9C) and therefore, the electronic devices are devices in motor vehicle luxury feature electronic.

Regarding claim 5, Palalau et al. disclose in figures 1, 2a that a device comprising a switch device (28) for switching the device among various device (audio, climate, navigation...); an assignment changing device for change operator functions of operator control changed with respect to assignments a display for indicating a type of device (see figure 2a) and corresponding operating function parameters and operator control in the form of keys (by selected switching keys 30a-30c see figure 1).

Regarding claim 6, Palalau et al. disclose that wherein the device is an operating console at least partially integrated on to a steering wheel (see abstract, see figure 1, see groups of switches 28a-28f located on the steering wheel).

### ***Correspondence***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kimnhung Nguyen whose telephone number (703) 308-0425.

Art Unit: 2674

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, **RICHARD A HJERPE** can be reached on (703) 305-4709.

**Any response to this action should be mailed to:**

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Washington, D. C. 20231


**Or faxed to:**

**(703) 872-9314 (for Technology Center 2600 only).**

Hand-delivery response should be brought to: Crystal Park II, 2121 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA Sixth Floor (Receptionist).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Technology Center 2600 Customer Service Office whose telephone number is (703) 306-0377.

Kimnhung Nguyen  
July 7, 2003



**RICHARD HJERPE**  
**SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER**  
**TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600**